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ABSTRACT

Data and descriptive analysis of enrollment trends for colleges are presented. Statistical tables and charts indicate trends in births in the United States for 1961-1973, college enrollment by age and sex for five-year intervals between 1968 and 1988, college enrollment by type of institution for two-year intervals between 1968 and 1988, college enrollment by sex and attendance status for full-time and part-time students, total and full-time equivalent college enrollment, enrollment in grades K-8 and 9-12, and total enrollment in two-year and four-year institutions of higher education, by sex and attendance status of students and control of institutions. (SW)

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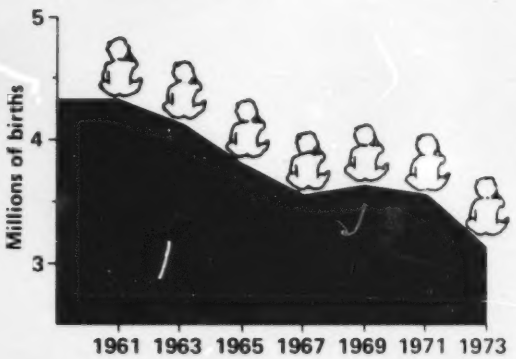
Enrollment Declines Foreseen for Colleges in the 1980's

Many small private colleges may face closure in the 1980's if they are unable to enroll more older, part-time students, according to Marie D. Eldridge, Administrator of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). The declining birth-rate of the 1960's will soon begin to affect all college enrollments. But small private schools, which largely depend upon 18-to-24 year-old students, will be hit the hardest.

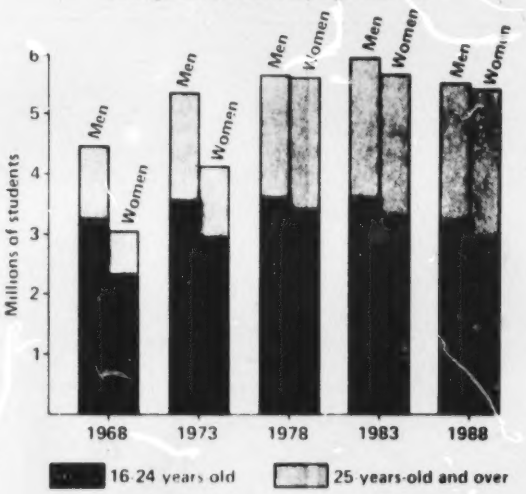
Births in the United States: 1961-1973



From 1961 to 1973, the annual number of births declined from 4.3 to 3.1 million. In the mid-1970's, elementary schools began to feel the impact of this decline, which caused decreasing enrollments and school closings in many parts of the Nation. Currently, secondary schools are experiencing enrollment declines. By 1982, as the low-birth groups reach traditional college age (18 to 24 years old), many colleges will be faced with declining enrollments.

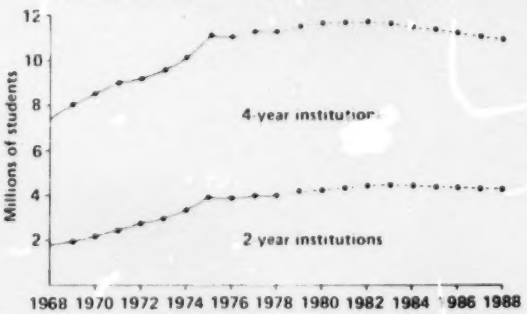
Fortunately for many schools, this trend has already been partially offset by another: more and more people aged 25 or over, especially women, are entering college (table 1). Two-year schools in particular are admitting older students, who comprised 39 percent of the undergraduates at these schools in 1977. Only 22 percent of the undergraduates at 4-year colleges

College enrollment by age and sex



were 25 or older. Should this disparity continue through the 1980's, two-year schools would have an advantage over 4-year schools in withstanding the coming enrollment decreases. In fact, while enrollment in 4-year schools is projected to decline from 7.3 million in 1981 to 6.7 million in 1988, it should fall only slightly in 2-year colleges, from 4.38 million to 4.35 million (tables 2 and 3).

College enrollment by type of institution



In higher education generally, enrollment increased through the 1970's, from 7.5 million in 1968 to 11.3 million in 1978. Enrollments of women

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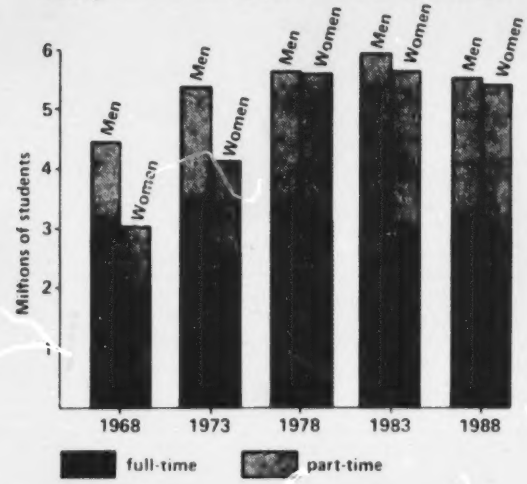
gained considerably during that period,virtually equalling that of men in 1978 and surpassing them in part-time enrollment (table 4). Slight

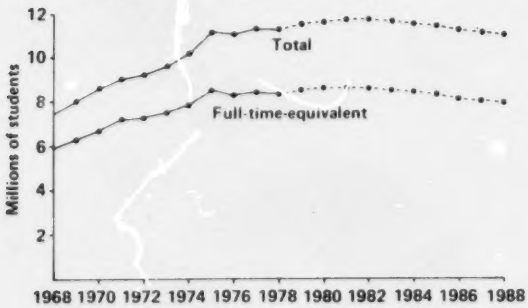
College enrollment by sex and attendance status



increases in total enrollments are expected to continue after 1978 for a few more years, reaching 11.7 million in 1981. They will then begin to taper off to 11.0 million in 1988.

Though the influx of students 25 and over will cushion the blow caused by the declining number of younger students, this decline will not be completely offset. This is true because most older students enroll in part-time programs, while those from the younger group usually attend full-time. Total enrollment will therefore show only a slow decline in the 1980's, whereas full-time equivalent enrollment will fall more rapidly. After rising from 8.4 million in 1978 to 8.6 million in 1981, full-time equivalent enrollment should drop to 8.0 million by 1988 (table 5).

Total and full-time-equivalent college enrollment



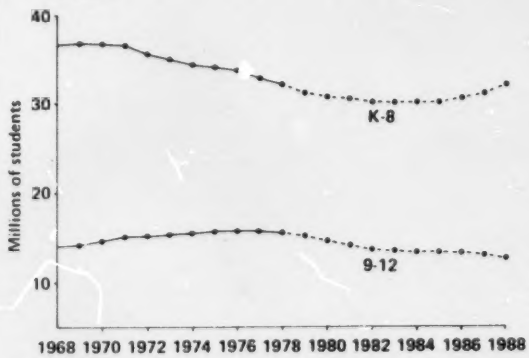
Since many older, part-time students enroll in public 2-year institutions, the enrollment in these schools is expected to increase from 3.9 million in 1978 to 4.2 million in 1988. Four-year schools, both public and private, will bear most of the burden of declining enrollment: public 4-year schools dropping from 4.9 to 4.6 million and private 4-year decreasing from 2.3 to 2.1 million. Most public 4-year schools have relatively large enrollments and should be able to survive the coming enrollment declines. But there are many small, private 4-year schools, and should enrollment declines be concentrated in these schools, many of them could be faced with closure (tables 2 and 3).

Elementary and Secondary Enrollment

While the declining birthrate continues to cause enrollment drops from kindergarten through 8th grade, these are expected to bottom out in 1984. Enrollments then, for public and nonpublic schools combined, are projected to be 30.2 million--down from 1969's high of 36.8 million. The rate of decline will be steeper for public schools. By 1988, total enrollments will rise to 32.2 million, slightly more than the 1978 level of 32.0 million.

In contrast to the trend for the earlier grades, enrollments in grades 9-12 increased between 1968 and 1976, from 14.1 to 15.7 million. They began to drop slightly the next two years, but significant decreases are expected in the 1980's, reaching 12.7 million by 1988. Again, public schools are expected to suffer steeper drops than private schools.

Enrollment in grades K-8 and 9-12 of regular day schools



These findings and others were extracted from the forthcoming publication, *Projections of Education Statistics to 1988-89*. It will present highlights of enrollment projections for elementary and secondary schools and institutions of higher education. It will also show projections for graduates and degrees, teachers and instructional staff, and expenditures. In addition, *Projections* will include alternative projections for most topics and sections detailing the methodology and assumptions underlying the projections.

Table 1.—Enrollment in higher education, by age, sex and attendance status: United States, fall 1968, 1973, 1978, 1983, 1988

(In thousands)

Age	1968 (Estimated)			1973 (Estimated)			1978 (Estimated)			1983 (Projected)			1988 (Projected)		
	Total	Full-time	Part-time	Total	Full-time	Part-time	Total	Full-time	Part-time	Total	Full-time	Part-time	Total	Full-time	Part-time
Total	7513	5210	2303	9602	6189	3411	11259	6667	4592	11612	6733	4879	11047	6185	4862
16 and 17 years	272	250	22	291	262	29	263	241	22	224	201	23	225	202	23
18 and 19 years	2419	2260	159	2526	2322	204	2755	2422	333	2587	2287	300	2335	2063	272
20 and 21 years	1794	1564	230	2109	1806	303	2212	1817	395	2223	1845	378	1897	1575	322
22 to 24 years	1086	638	448	1585	970	615	1804	1131	673	1910	1178	732	1739	1072	667
25 to 29 years	889	290	599	1485	484	1001	1730	600	1130	1984	715	1269	2030	731	1299
30 to 34 years	429	102	327	659	153	506	1038	268	770	1201	305	896	1338	340	998
35 years and over	627	107	520	947	194	753	1458	188	1270	1483	202	1281	1483	202	1281
Men	4478	3169	1309	5371	3579	1792	5640	3527	2113	5925	3641	2284	5631	3350	2281
16 and 17 years	130	118	12	122	111	11	107	96	11	92	81	11	93	82	11
18 and 19 years	1306	1243	63	1299	1197	102	1326	1170	156	1257	1119	138	1134	1009	125
20 and 21 years	1064	960	104	1149	992	157	1158	977	181	1174	993	181	1002	848	154
22 and 24 years	725	474	251	994	682	312	1027	694	333	1097	738	359	999	672	327
25 to 29 years	669	239	430	993	368	625	984	377	607	1152	461	691	1178	471	707
30 to 34 years	268	70	198	388	107	281	523	133	390	621	163	458	693	182	511
35 years and over	317	65	252	428	123	305	515	81	434	532	86	446	532	86	446
Women	3035	2041	994	4231	2612	1621	5619	3140	2479	5687	3092	2595	5416	2835	2581
16 and 17 years	142	132	10	169	151	18	156	145	11	132	120	12	132	120	12
18 and 19 years	1113	1017	96	1227	1125	102	1429	1252	177	1330	1168	162	1201	1054	147
20 and 21 years	730	604	126	960	814	146	1054	840	214	1049	852	197	895	727	168
22 to 24 years	361	164	197	591	288	303	777	437	340	813	440	373	740	400	340
25 to 29 years	220	51	169	492	116	376	746	223	523	832	254	578	852	260	592
30 to 34 years	161	32	129	271	46	225	514	135	379	580	142	438	645	158	487
35 years and over	310	42	268	519	71	448	942	107	835	951	116	835	951	116	835

NOTE: —Data are for 50 States and the District of Columbia for all years. Because of rounding, details may not add to totals.

SOURCES: —(1) U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, National Center for Education Statistics, *Opening (Fall) Enrollment in Higher Education.* (2) U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports, School Enrollment — Social and Economic Characteristics of Students,* Series P-20.

Table 2.—Total enrollment in 4-year institutions of higher education, by sex and attendance status of students and control of institutions: United States, fall 1968 to 1988

(In thousands)

Year (fall)	Total enrollment	Sex		Attendance status		Control	
		Men	Women	Full-time	Part-time	Public	Private
1968	5721	3397	2333	4235	1486	3784	1937
1969	6028	3555	2473	4442	1586	4050	1978
1970	6358	3726	2631	4650	1708	4326	2032
1971	6463	3758	2705	4787	1676	4438	2024
1972	6459	3695	2764	4732	1727	4430	2029
1973	6590	3718	2872	4757	1833	4530	2060
1974	6820	3791	3029	4861	1959	4703	2117
1975	7215	3984	3231	5080	2134	4998	2217
1976	7129	3831	3298	5053	2076	4902	2227
1977	7242	3823	3419	5138	2104	4945	2297
1978	7332	3756	3476	5109	2123	4912	2320
				Projections			
1979	7292	3857	3435	5114	2178	4971	2321
1980	7302	3880	3422	5113	2189	4976	2326
1981	7309	3898	3411	5103	2206	4981	2328
1982	7258	3882	3376	5058	2200	4945	2313
1983	7187	3855	3332	4985	2202	4896	2291
1984	7082	3808	3274	4883	2199	4823	2259
1985	6968	3754	3214	4771	2197	4744	2224
1986	6846	3693	3153	4654	2192	4661	2185
1987	6751	3644	3107	4570	2181	4596	2155
1988	6694	3613	3081	4524	2170	4557	2137

NOTE:—Data are for 50 States and the District of Columbia for all years. Because of rounding, details may not add to totals and figures for past years may differ slightly from previously published figures.

SOURCES:—U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, National Center for Education Statistics, *Opening (Fall) Enrollment in Higher Education.*

Table 3.—Total enrollment in 2-year institutions of higher education, by sex and attendance status of students and control of institutions: United States, fall 1968 to 1988

(In thousands)

Year (fall)	Total enrollment	Sex		Attendance status		Control	
		Men	Women	Full-time	Part-time	Public	Private
1968	1792	1090	702	976	817	1646	146
1969	1977	1191	786	1057	920	1847	130
1970	2223	1317	906	1165	1058	2102	121
1971	2486	1449	1037	1291	1195	2366	120
1972	2756	1544	1212	1340	1416	2641	115
1973	3012	1653	1360	1432	1580	2890	122
1974	3404	1832	1572	1509	1895	3285	119
1975	3970	2165	1805	1761	2209	3836	134
1976	3883	1980	1903	1664	2219	3752	132
1977	4042	1965	2077	1654	2388	3902	141
1978	4028	1885	2143	1558	2470	3873	155
				Projections			
1979	4216	1988	2228	1703	2513	4059	157
1980	4309	2027	2282	1734	2575	4148	161
1981	4381	2056	2325	1750	2631	4219	162
1982	4412	2066	2346	1757	2655	4249	163
1983	4426	2070	2356	1747	2679	4263	163
1984	4410	2060	2350	1718	2692	4249	161
1985	4390	2048	2342	1689	2701	4230	160
1986	4369	2036	2333	1667	2702	4211	158
1987	4353	2023	2330	1655	2698	4197	156
1988	4354	2018	2336	1661	2693	4197	157

NOTE.—Data are for 50 States and the District of Columbia for all years. Because of rounding, details may not add to totals and figures for past years may differ slightly from previously published figures.

SOURCES.—U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, National Center for Education Statistics, *Opening (Fall) Enrollment in Higher Education.*

Table 4.—Total enrollment in all institutions of higher education, by sex and attendance status of students and control of institutions: United States, fall 1968 to 1988
(In thousands)

Year (fall)	Total enrollment	Sex		Attendance status		Control	
		Men	Women	Full-time	Part-time	Public	Private
1968	7513	4478	3035	5210	2303	5431	2082
1969	8005	4746	3258	5499	2506	5897	2108
1970	8581	5044	3536	5815	2766	6428	2153
1971	8949	5207	3742	6077	2871	6804	2144
1972	9215	5239	3976	6072	3142	7071	2144
1973	9602	5371	4231	6189	3413	7420	2183
1974	10224	5622	4601	6370	3853	7989	2235
1975	11185	6149	5036	6841	4344	8835	2350
1976	11012	5811	5201	6717	4295	8653	2359
1977	11286	5789	5497	6793	4493	8847	2437
1978	11259	5640	5619	6667	4592	8784	2475
				Projections			
1979	11508	5845	5663	6817	4691	9030	2478
1980	11611	5907	5704	6847	4764	9124	2487
1981	11690	5954	5736	6853	4837	9200	2490
1982	11670	5948	5722	6815	4855	9194	2476
1983	11613	5925	5688	6732	4881	9159	2454
1984	11492	5868	5624	6601	4891	9072	2420
1985	11358	5802	5556	6460	4898	8974	2384
1986	11215	5729	5486	6321	4894	8872	2343
1987	11104	5667	5437	6225	4879	8793	2311
1988	11048	5631	5417	6185	4863	8754	2294

NOTE:—Data are for 50 States and the District of Columbia for all years. Because of rounding, details may not add to totals and figures for past years may differ slightly from previously published figures.

SOURCES:—U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, National Center for Education Statistics, *Opening (Fall) Enrollment in Higher Education.*

Table 5.—Full-time equivalent enrollment in all institutions of higher education, by enrollment level of student and type of institution: United States, 1970 to 1988
(In thousands)

Year	Total	Undergraduate		Graduate		First-professional	
		4-year	2-year	4-year	2-year	4-year	2-year
1970	6738	4458	1518	599	0	163	0
1971	7149	4632	1719	613	0	185	0
1972	7254	4587	1847	622	0	198	0
1973	7453	4560	2014	669	0	210	0
1974	7805	4670	2199	710	0	226	0
1975	8481	4914	2579	756	2	229	0
1976	8313	4838	2461	780	1	234	0
1977	8415	4919	2479	775	1	240	0
1978	8361	4924	2410	778	1	248	0
			Projections				
1979	8539	4916	2587	788	0	248	0
1980	8595	4909	2640	794	0	252	0
1981	8627	4892	2675	802	0	258	0
1982	8595	4846	2691	800	0	259	0
1983	8521	4769	2689	802	0	262	0
1984	8394	4663	2665	803	0	264	0
1985	8255	4550	2639	801	0	265	0
1986	8114	4434	2617	799	0	264	0
1987	8013	4354	2604	792	0	263	0
1988	7967	4317	2608	782	0	260	0

NOTE:—Data are for 50 States and the District of Columbia for all years. Because of rounding, details may not add to totals and figures for past years may differ slightly from previously published figures.

SOURCES:—U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, National Center for Education Statistics, *Opening (Fall) Enrollment in Higher Education.*

Table 6.—Enrollment in grades K-8 and 9-12 of regular day schools, by control of institution: United States, fall 1968 to 1988

(In thousands)

Year (fall)	Total public and nonpublic			Public			Nonpublic		
	K-12	K-8	9-12	K-12	K-8	9-12	K-12	K-8	9-12
1968	50775	36657	14118	44944	32226	12718	5831	4431	1400
1969	51135	36814	14321	45619	32597	13022	5516	[1]4217	[1]1299
1970	51318	36686	14632	45909	32577	13332	5409	4109	1300
1971	51204	36088	15116	46081	32265	13816	5123	[1]3823	[1]1300
1972	50785	35569	15216	45744	31831	13913	5041	[1]3738	[1]1303
1973	50375	34999	15377	45429	31353	14077	4946	[1]3646	[1]1300
1974	50116	34584	15532	45053	30921	14132	5063	[1]3663	[1]1400
1975	49878	34174	15704	44791	30487	14304	5087	[1]3687	[1]1400
1976	49495	33768	15727	44316	30006	14310	5179	3762	1417
1977	48672	32951	15720	43577	29336	14240	5095	3615	1480
1978	47689	32061	15628	42611	28455	14156	5078	3606	1472
Projections									
1979	46621	31376	15245	41557	27822	13735	5064	3554	1510
1980	45771	30974	14797	40696	27389	13307	5075	3585	1490
1981	44912	30614	14298	39858	27037	12821	5054	3577	1477
1982	44025	30217	13808	39111	26795	12316	4914	3422	1492
1983	43768	30273	13495	38666	26601	12065	5102	3672	1430
1984	43620	30208	13422	38491	26428	12063	5139	3780	1359
1985	43753	30257	13496	38548	26448	12100	5205	3809	1396
1986	44077	30675	13402	38780	26851	11929	5297	3824	1473
1987	44472	31369	13103	39073	27495	11578	5399	3874	1525
1988	44890	32223	12667	39374	28259	11115	5516	3964	1552

[1] Estimated

NOTE:—Data are for 50 States and the District of Columbia for all years. Because of rounding, details may not add to totals and figures for past years may differ slightly from previously published figures.

SOURCES:—U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, National Center for Education Statistics publications: *(a) Statistics of Public Elementary and Secondary Day Schools, (b) Bulletin: Selected Public and Private Elementary and Secondary Education Statistics, October 23, 1979, (c) Statistics of Nonpublic Elementary and Secondary Schools.*